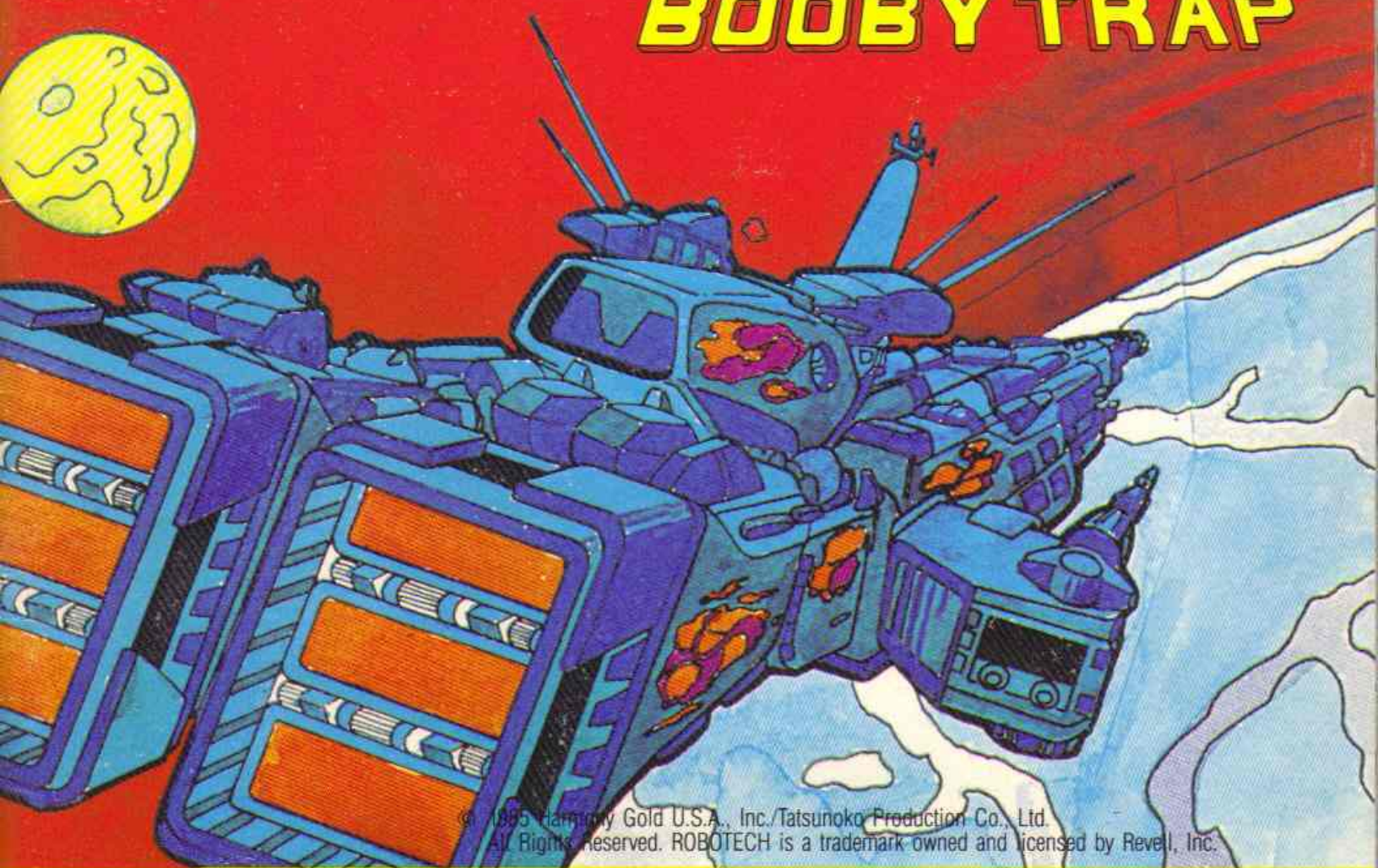


BOOK AND RECORDING ²⁰⁴²

ROBOTECH

BOOBY TRAP



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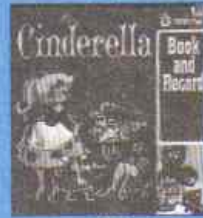
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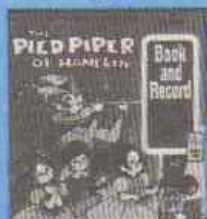
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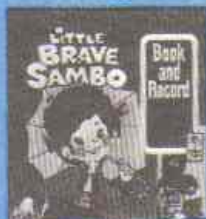
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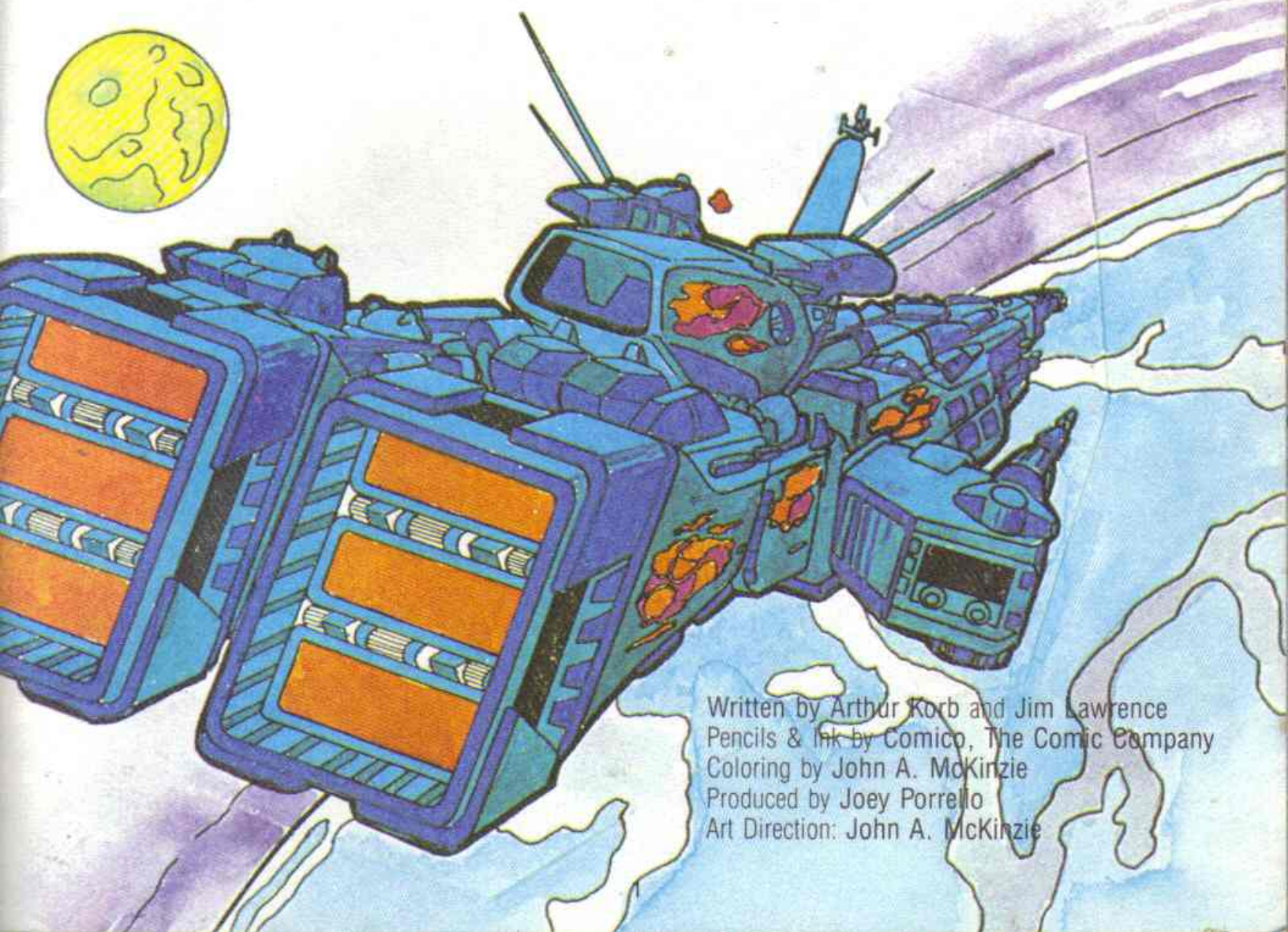
1961

ROBOTECH

BOOBY TRAP

In the year 2009, something happened that would change the course of human history. A gigantic alien spaceship came roaring out of the sky on a collision course with earth! The derelict crash-landed on Macross Island in the South Pacific.

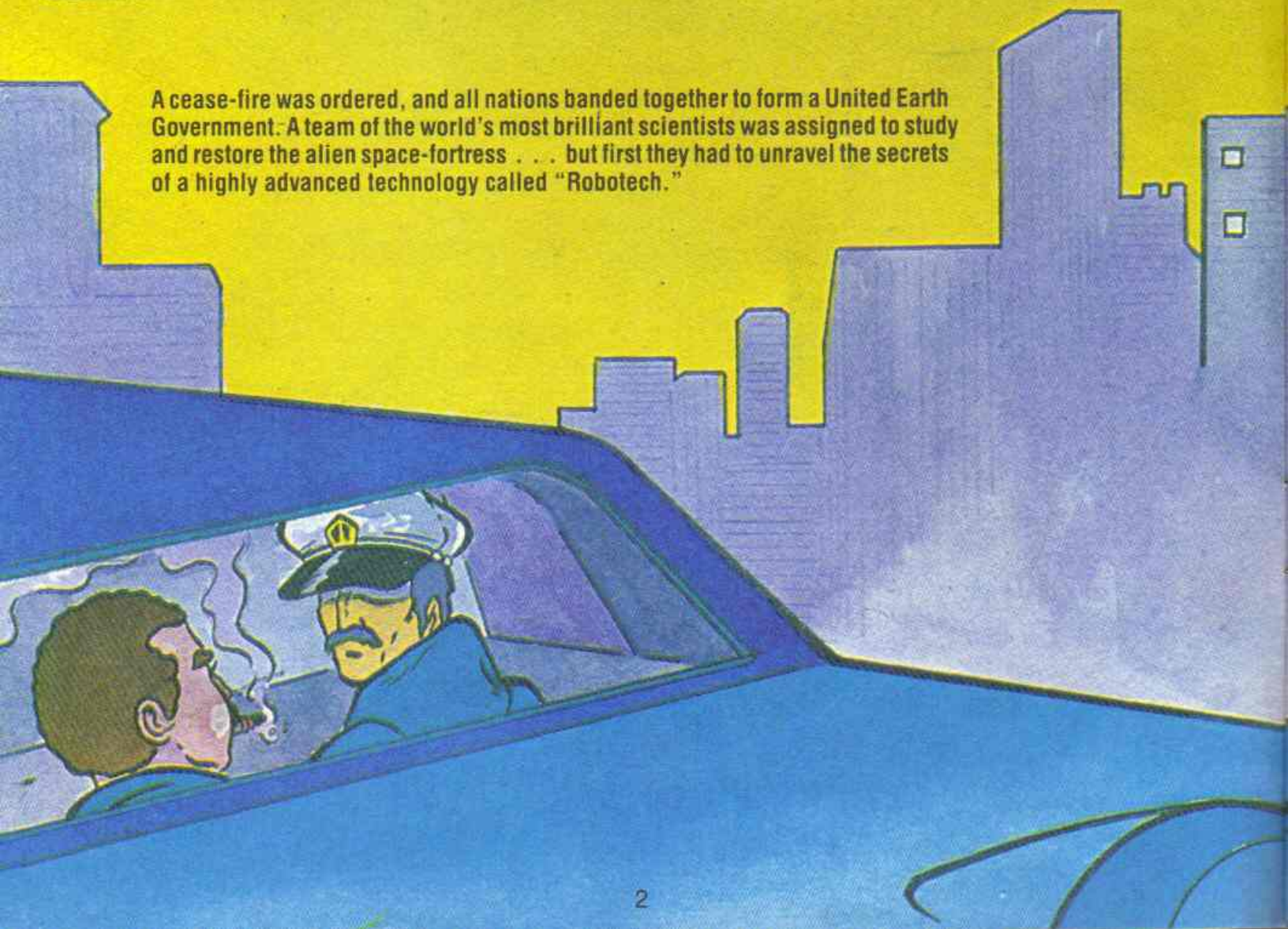
At that time, our planet was ravaged by global war. But the threat of invasion from outer space helped to shock mankind to its senses.



Written by Arthur Korb and Jim Lawrence
Pencils & Ink by Comico, The Comic Company
Coloring by John A. McKinzie
Produced by Joey Porrello
Art Direction: John A. McKinzie

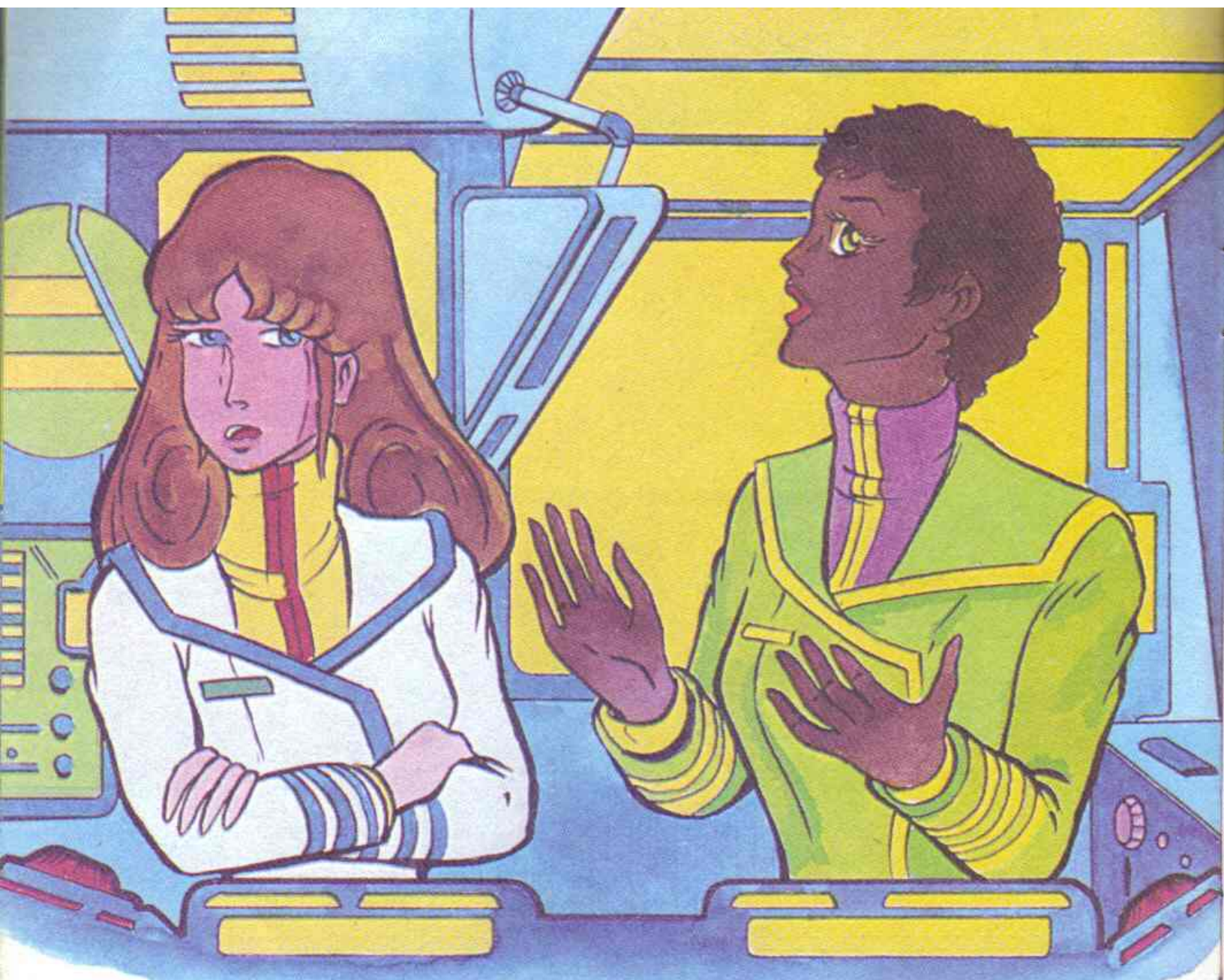


A cease-fire was ordered, and all nations banded together to form a United Earth Government. A team of the world's most brilliant scientists was assigned to study and restore the alien space-fortress . . . but first they had to unravel the secrets of a highly advanced technology called "Robotech."





For ten years, our planet's entire resources were devoted to rebuilding the huge battle-star. A great city had grown up around the Robotech project. And now, on the eve of the spaceship's maiden flight, almost the whole population of Macross City had turned out to celebrate and witness the launching of Earth's new defender! Hearts pounded with excitement as the countdown began. Aboard the giant spaceship, the crew of cadets fresh from the Robotech Academy were busy with the pre-launch checklist.



Up on the navigational bridge, half a dozen female cadets were tending the control console.

"All manual systems are green light," reported Samantha.

Lisa, the blond cadet in charge, sighed and murmured to the girl next to her. "The ceremony starts in fifteen minutes. I hope the captain gets here in time. I hear he didn't get much sleep last night."

Claudia grinned. "Yeah, the other officers threw a farewell party for him."

"And where were you, Claudia?" said Lisa. "You didn't come in until four this morning."

A mischievous smile played over her companion's face. "You jealous? I had a late dinner with Commander Fokker."

Lisa was shocked. "Claudia!" she gasped. "You stayed out all night, knowing you had flight duty today?"

"So? What's the big fuss about, Lisa?"

Her response infuriated the blond cadet. "Ohhh! . . . I'm warning you!" Lisa fumed.



"I hate to interrupt," Claudia needled, catching Lisa off guard, "but hadn't you better check your monitor, Commander?" "It's an unidentified incoming aircraft," said a cadet called Kim.

Lisa spoke into the radio: "Attention, aircraft approaching on course one-zero-seven. Please identify yourself. Please identify yourself."

"This is Rick Hunter," the boyish-looking pilot responded. "Invitation number two-zero-one." Lisa checked it out on the computer. "That's confirmed as an invitation from Lieutenant Commander Fokker," she called back. "Follow Course five-seven for landing." "Roger!"

His trim little jet swiftly took its place in the landing pattern.

A voice from the public address system boomed out over the crowded stands surrounding the spacecraft landing field: "And now we present a display of aerial acrobatics, demonstrating the amazing advances we have made through Robotechnology! Lieutenant Commander Roy Fokker, leader of the Varitech Fighter Squadron, will describe the action for us."

Fokker's crisp voice took over the mike. "Today you'll see how we've applied human know-how to a complex alien technology. Keep your eyes on Planes Two and Four," he advised. "Flying at speeds of 800 miles per hour only fifty feet above the ground, they will pass within just a few yards of one another. Robotechnology makes such precision possible . . ."

The speaker broke off with a gulp and his eyes widened anxiously as a small jet plane buzzed the airfield.

"Huh—?! . . . Oh no!"





Suddenly Fokker recognized the craft and its pilot. "Rick! Is that you, Rick Hunter?!" "Roy!" the flier responded. "It's good to hear your voice, old buddy! I understand you're a lieutenant commander now!"

"Are you crazy?" Fokker shouted into the mike. "Get that junk heap outa here!" The crowd broke into laughter as the little jet began to do crazy loops and spins over the airfield. But Rick's show-off stunting was no laughing matter to Lieutenant Commander Fokker — not when two high-speed fighters were about to streak through the same airspace!

"Hunter!" he yelled. "When I get my hands on you! — ULLP! Stop clowning around — look out!!" The crowd let out a terrified gasp as the two starfighters came zeroing-in on the jet at lightning speed! "Get outa there!" Fokker cried hoarsely.

A collision seemed unavoidable!

But it never happened! The crowd cheered and shrieked with delight as the little jet zoomed straight upward! The two fighters passed safely below, missing it completely.

The boyish jet pilot looked a bit pale but still cocky as he landed and climbed out of his ship.

"Hi, Roy!" he smiled.

The lieutenant commander came charging across the airfield to chew him out. "Just who do you think you are?! What were you trying to do — get yourself killed?!"

"Hey calm down!" Rick pleaded.

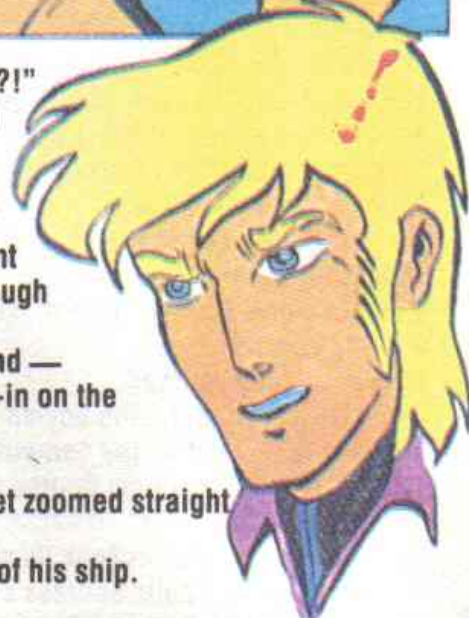
"And while we're at it," Fokker growled, "where'd you learn to do that, anyway?"

"It was just a simple booster climb. You taught me that yourself when I was just a kid."

Rick could see from his friend's face that he would have to talk fast to stay out of trouble. "Hey-y-y! I have to admit those guys are pretty good," he went on. "Not as good as me, of course . . ."

"You don't have to brag to me, Rick," the flight officer cut him short. "I know all about your winning the amateur flying competition last year."

Rick changed the subject. "You promised my dad that as soon as the war was over you'd come back to the air circus. Why did you go back on that promise, Roy?"





Fokker shrugged and flushed with embarrassment. "I really felt guilty about letting your father down . . . only . . . this Robotech thing is so exciting I just couldn't give it up. It just gets in your blood or something — I don't know."

"What is Robotech, anyway?" asked the boyish pilot as they walked off across the airfield. "Just more modern war machinery? And the allies who built it — what do you suppose they're like?"

Little did Rick or Lieutenant Commander Fokker guess that a second terrifying contact was about to take place with those same aliens!

At that very moment, in fact, another gigantic alien spaceship had just blasted into the earth's solar system! It was hunting for the last space-fortress that our scientists had now finished rebuilding — and it was leading a vast battle-fleet manned by warriors specially trained to conquer other planets! On the bridge of the enemy flagship stood Breetai, the dwarfish commander of the alien armada.

"The finder beam has locked on this planet," he remarked with a scowl. "Are you sure this is where the transmission was coming from?"

"Yes sir, I'm positive," said Exedore, his one-eyed second-in-command. "They could have executed a re-fold . . ."

"It's doubtful, sir — there was no evidence of a second jump into hyperspace." Breetai nodded as he studied the monitor screens.

"Mm-hmm. They couldn't have gone far in their condition . . . and they would have to have landed in order to repair the ship. That's logical speculation, I think."



"I agree," said Exedore. "It would seem very likely sir."

"Send a scout team!" ordered Commander Breetai.

Meanwhile, back on the exhibition landing field, Roy Fokker was showing his young friend the latest military aircraft.

"Wow!" exclaimed Rick. "This fighter's a real beauty, all right! It looks great — but how does it handle?"

"Mm — well, why don't you just climb aboard and see for yourself?"

"You mean that?!" Rick was thrilled.

Lieutenant Commander Fokker clapped him on the back. "Sure — I'll go along and ride piggyback behind you."

As they chatted, the ceremonies continued. Senator Russo was speaking over a microphone in the reviewing stand.

"This is a day we've all been looking forward to for ten years!" he proclaimed. "The Robotech Project has been a tremendous asset to the economy of Macross City and to the welfare of our people . . ."

The Robotech ship's captain was standing by during the senator's speech. A messenger came hurrying up to him.

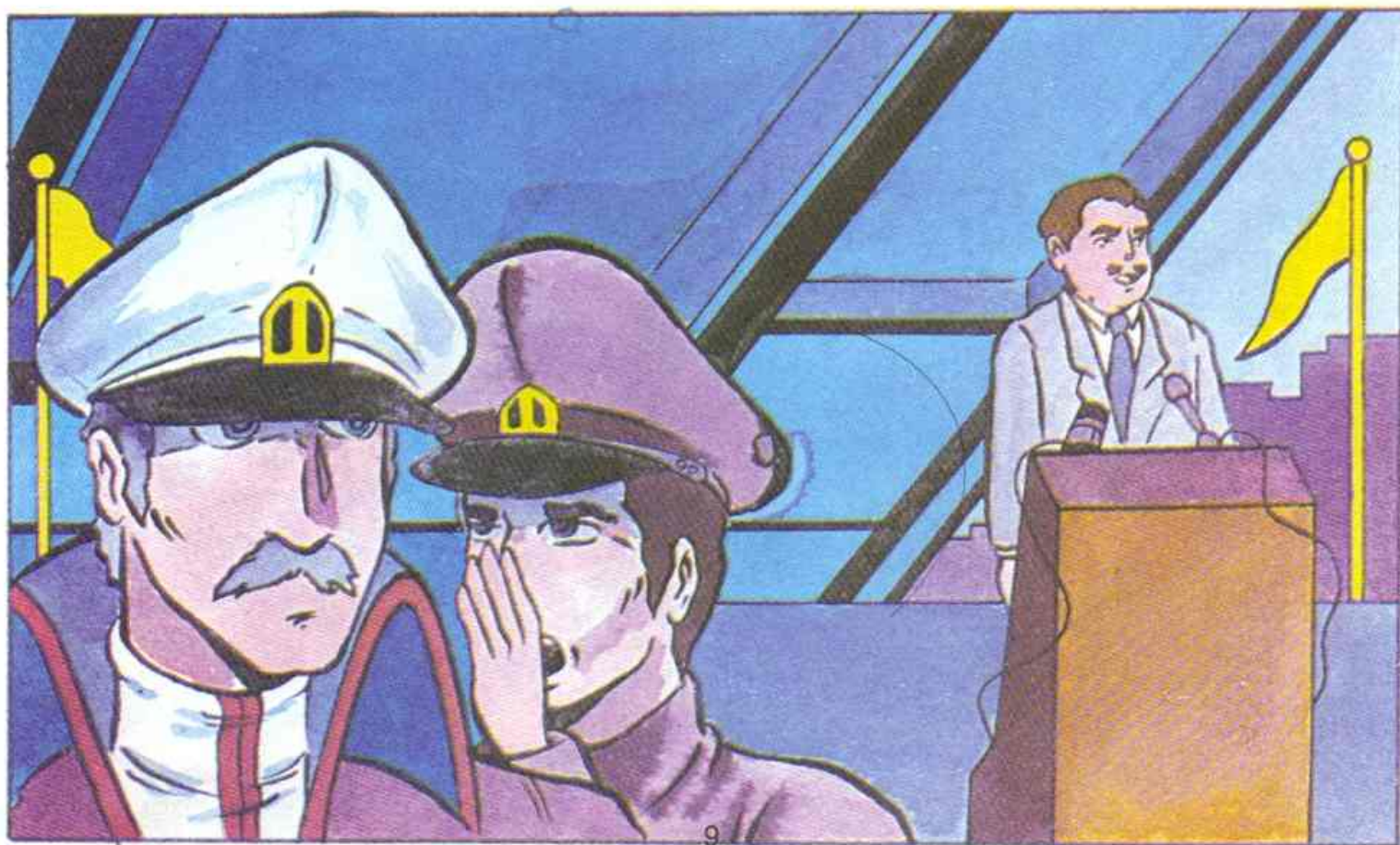
"Excuse me, sir — urgent message from the space monitoring station! A strange flash of light, and an explosion, followed by irregularities in the gravitational field!"

Captain Gloval's face turned grim at the news. "The same sort of thing happened ten years ago," he recalled.

"You know what happened then, don't you?"

"That's when the alien ship arrived."

The captain nodded. "Better check it out."



Aboard the Robotech ship, the cadet called Claudia stared in dismay at the monitors. "Every system aboard the ship is starting up!" she gasped. "The defense system is activating the main guns to fire!" "Shut down all systems!" Lisa ordered. But the master control seemed frozen! "It doesn't work!" cried Claudia.



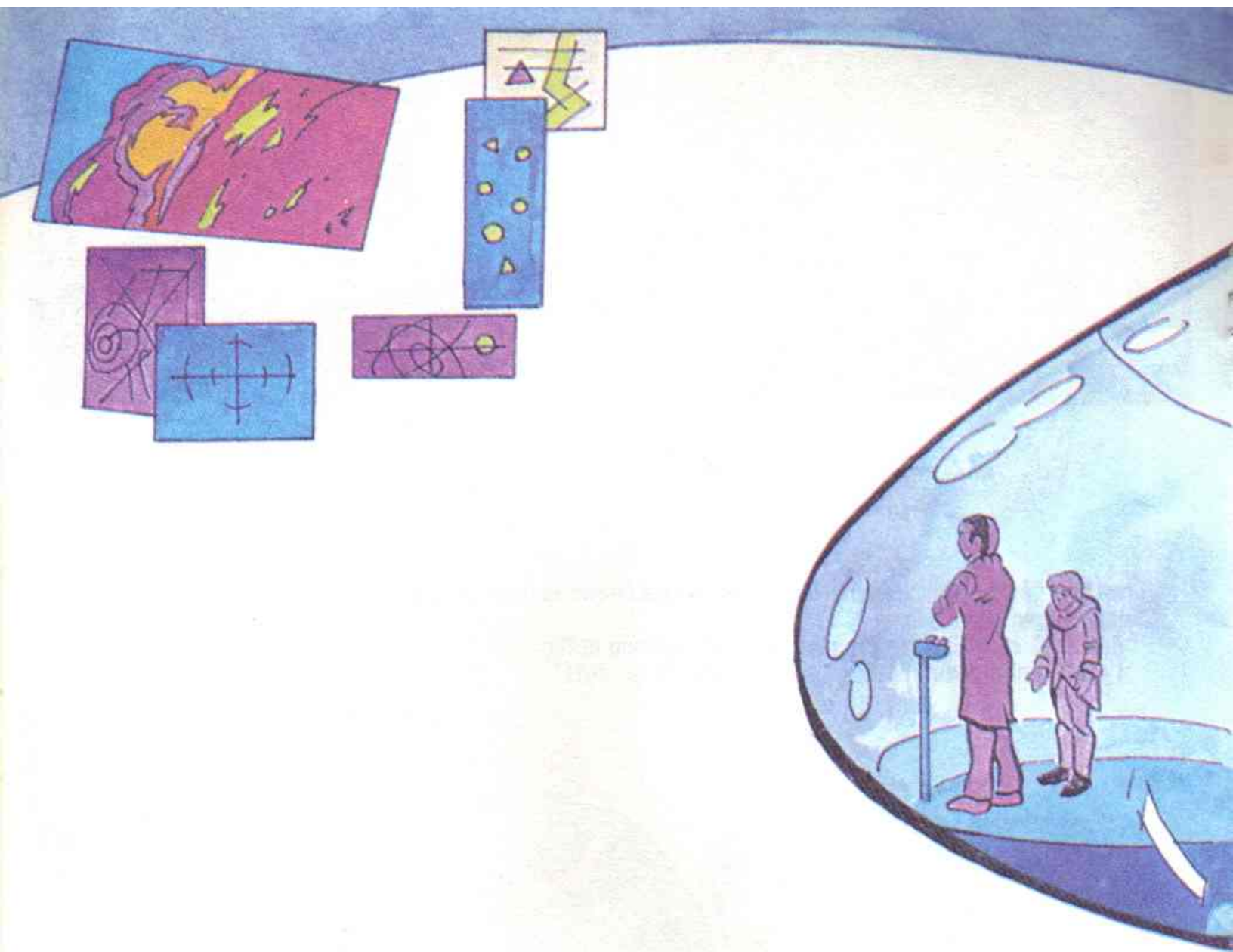


Just then Captain Gloval entered the bridge. He was thrown against the bulkhead by the energy blast of the electron-gun broadside.

"Captain!" called Lisa. "The main guns are starting to fire!"

"I can't control them!" Claudia added. "What'll we do?!"





On the enemy flagship, Breetai saw the flash of gunfire from the earth — and the brilliant explosion as the electron-beam missiles found their target. It was the tip-off he'd been waiting for — because only Robotech space-fortresses were armed with such weapons!

"Look at that!" he hissed to Exedore. "Now we know for sure that the ship is on that planet! All ships continue advancing, but exercise extreme caution!"

Back on earth, Claudia told the bridge crew: "We have control now . . . What happened?" Cadet Samantha answered: "The space monitor report is coming in. It shows what our guns were firing at." "I have it here, Sammie," Lisa cut in. "Two large objects, probably spaceships, in lunar orbit, two hundred thousand miles out. Both objects were struck dead-center by the beam and were disintegrated." Captain Gloval gave a bitter chuckle. Lisa turned in surprise. "Huh? Captain, what is it? What are you laughing about?" "It was so obvious! We should have known! A booby-trap, of course!" The girl cadets stared at him. "Booby trap, sir?" Gloval nodded grimly. "Yes, it's one of the oldest tricks in military history. A retreating enemy leaves behind hidden explosives and such. The aliens who abandoned this ship armed it with an automatic defense system designed to detect and destroy their enemies. The activation of the guns means that unfriendly forces have approached close enough to be a threat to us. Scramble all the forces and prepare for combat!" The captain was heavy-hearted as he watched his orders being carried out. "I hoped this moment wouldn't come in my lifetime," he muttered. "I had hoped that was a thing of the past. But here we go again . . . All right, move out!"





"Yes, sir." Lisa spoke into the mike. "All forces move out! We are under attack by alien invaders in sector four-one-two. This is not a drill! All forces proceed at once to battle formation!"

Lieutenant Commander Fokker's combat crews hastily manned their fighter craft.

"Well, boys, you heard her. This is the real thing!"

Lisa's voice came over their cockpit radios. "Wolf Team has cleared — Skull Team prepare for takeoff!"

"Skull Team ready!" Fokker responded. "All right, men, this is it! Let's go!"

Breetai watched the takeoff of the Earthlings' battle force. "What a disorderly arrangement!" he sneered. "These people are completely ignorant of space war tactics! . . . What?!" His eyes suddenly bulged as the Robotech ship came into clear view on his video screen. "That sure is the battlefortress!" he exclaimed. "But what's happened to it?!" "It appears to have been completely remodeled," said Exedore. The both listened to an intercom report from the flight deck: "Target pinpointed, Commander! We're launching fighters!"



By this time, all of Earth's defense force was airborne — except for a single fighter plane which was still visible on the airfield.

Lisa spoke sharply over the radio. "You there, on the exhibition grounds — we're on combat alert! Why haven't you taken off?!"

"You don't mean me, do you?" Rick stammered. "Hey! — Whaat?! Huh?—hey!"

"Don't waste any more time!" Lisa snapped. "Take off immediately!"

"What?!"

"— and join the fighter squadron!"

"What do you mean 'take off'?" said Rick. "The runway's demolished!"

"Runway Two is clear! You're fully armed, and your jets are overheating — so prepare for immediate takeoff!" The ground-crew technician circled his thumb and forefinger at Rick.

"All set, sir! Good hunting!" He saluted and closed the canopy of the young pilot's aircraft. Rick gave up objecting. "Well, okay — if you insist!"



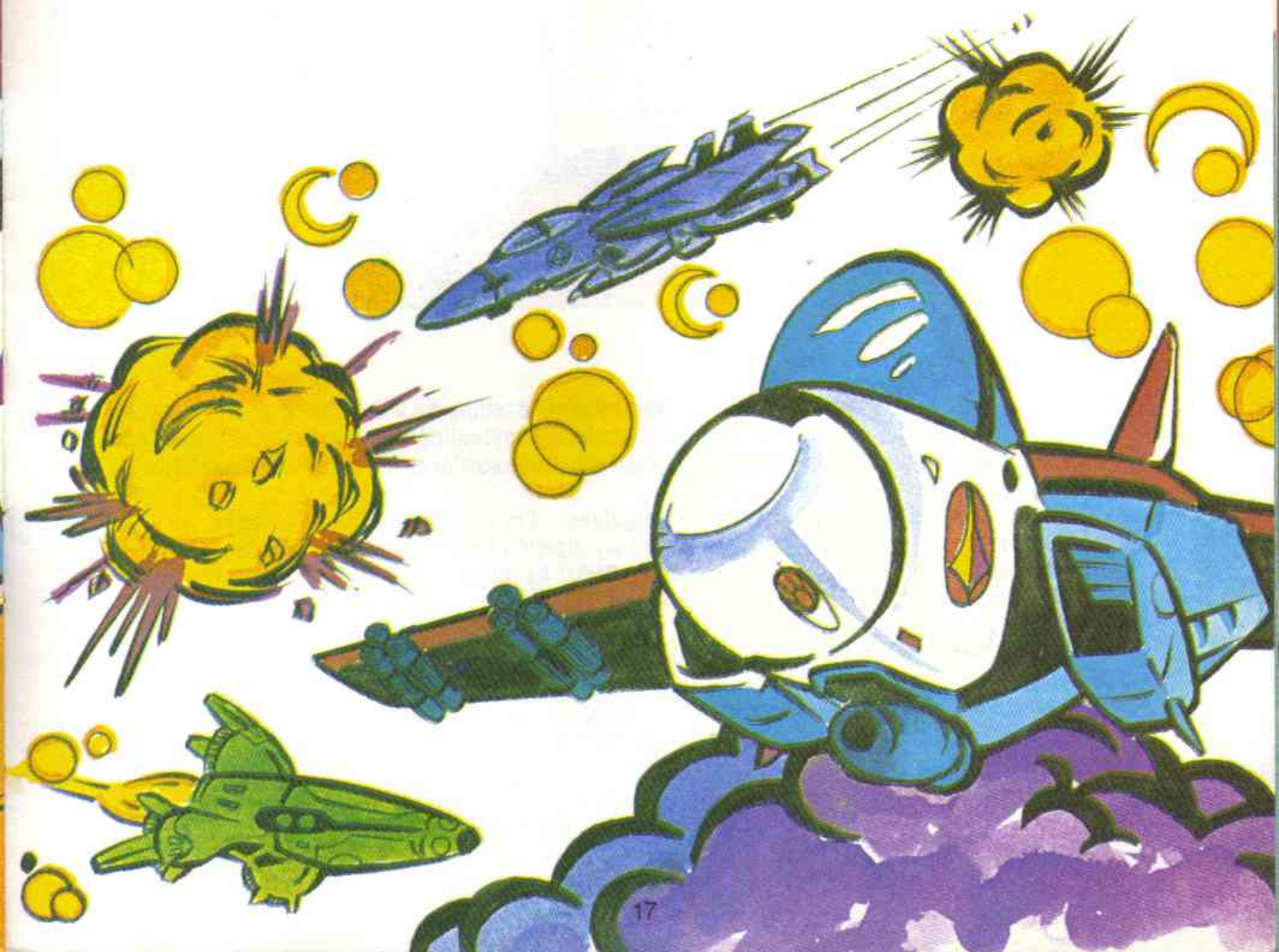
His heart was thumping. Actually he felt pleasantly excited at this chance to watch Earth's defenders take on the alien invaders. But he was hardly prepared for what happened next —

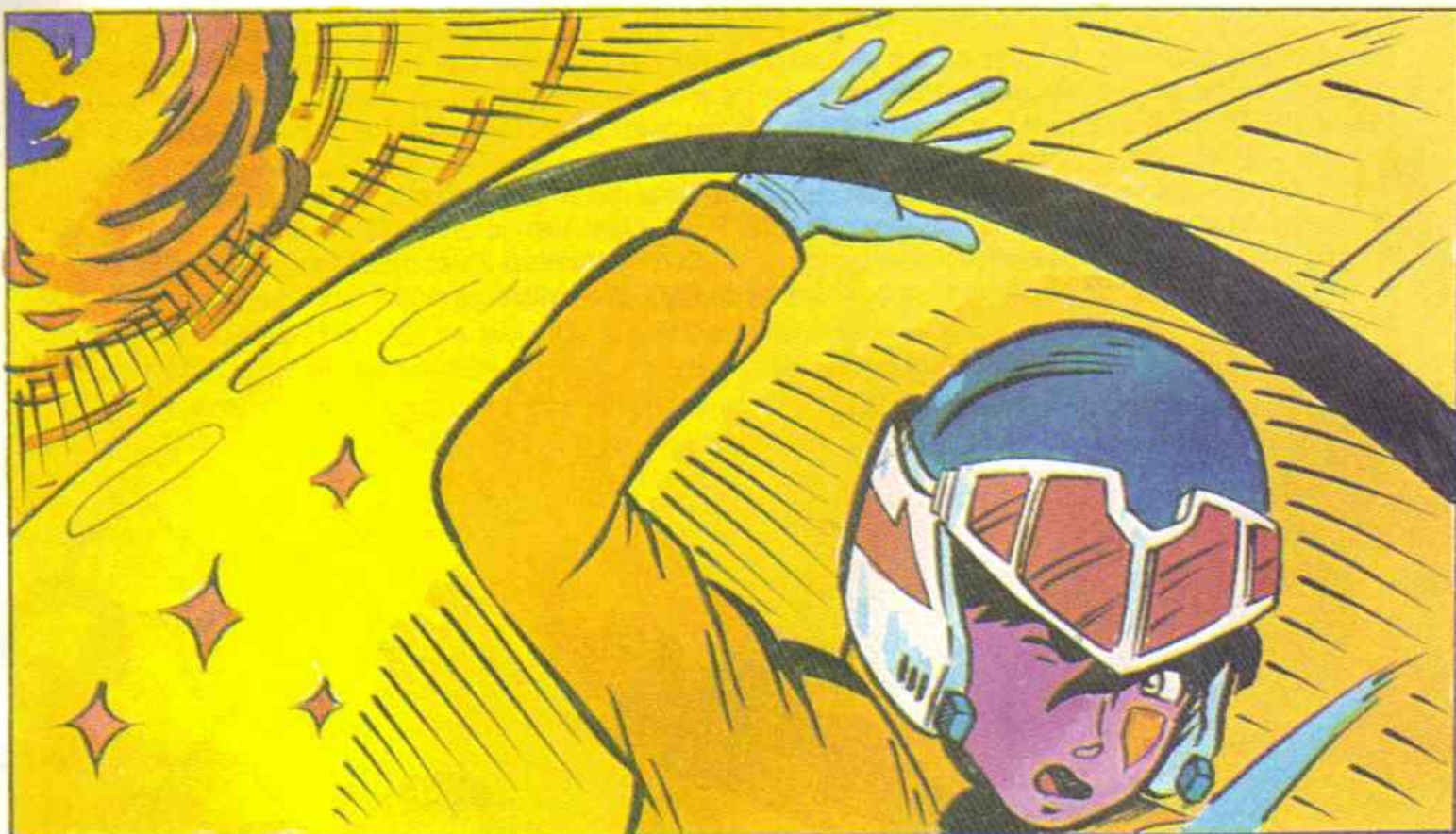
"Whoo-AHHHHH!" A scream of fear burst from Rick's throat as his jet shot skyward! The tremendous G-force was like a giant hand crushing him into the pilot's seat.

Next thing he knew he was streaking through space in the midst of Roy Fokker's fighter squadron!

Rick could hear the lieutenant commander on radio, issuing last-second orders to his pilots.

"This is Skull leader calling Varitech fighter group! . . . Intercept invaders at Zone four-two-eight. Traffic's pretty heavy out here, so break formation — but try to keep each other covered!"





"Hey-y-y, Fokker!" Rick exclaimed into the mike. "Would you mind telling me what's going on around here?!"
"Hm? Who's that?" Fokker scanned the skies for the pilot who had just called him — and suddenly he spotted the fighter he had been showing to his young friend, just a short time earlier on the airfield. "Rick! How's it feel to be a fighter pilot?"

"Hey, what're you talking about, big brother?" Rick gulped. "I'm not a fighter pilot — ohhh!"
His words changed to a frightened screech as an enemy electron bolt exploded at close range! Roy saw what had happened and peeled off to join him. "Rick!" he called. "Hang on, Rick — I'm comin'! You weren't hit — it was just a close one. You all right?"

"Phew! Yeah, I'm okay."

"Don't worry. Combat flying's scary for everybody when they first begin . . . Let's go get 'em, little brother!"
Rick felt another jolt of fear as he tried to join the attack formation. His ship wasn't responding!

"Climb and bank!" Fokker urged, sensing that something was wrong. "Rick—!!"

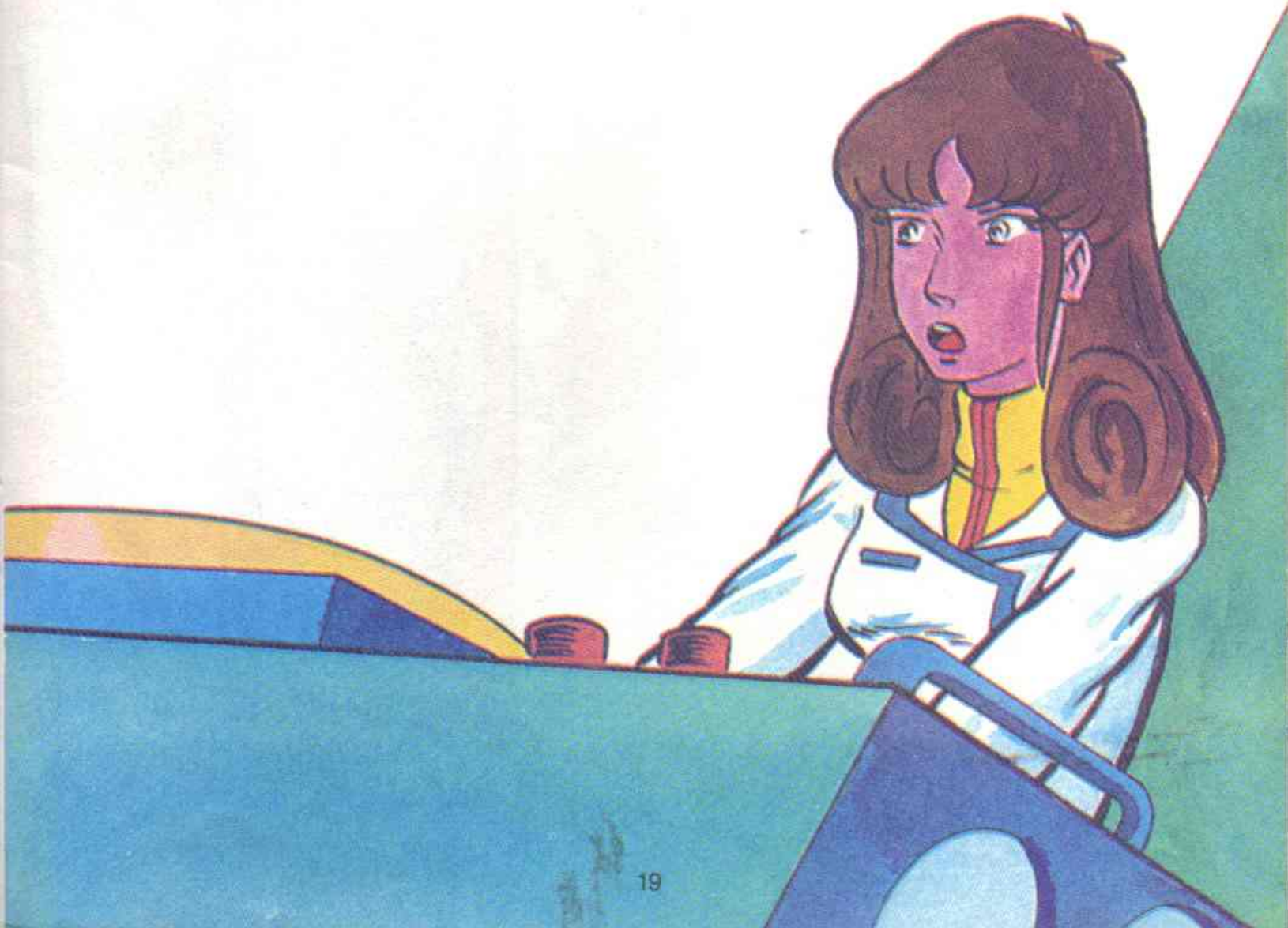
"I can't get control of it!" the young pilot called back. "I think I've had it, Roy! I'm getting no response from the controls at all! . . . OH-H-H!"

His fighter craft was suddenly plunging earthward!

Lisa's voice came over the radio. "This is SDF-1 control calling VF—one-zero-two! Pull out! You're diving right at us!"

"Tell me something I don't know!" Rick cried desperately. "I can't pull out — all the controls have lost their power!"

"Have you tried switching to Configuration B?"

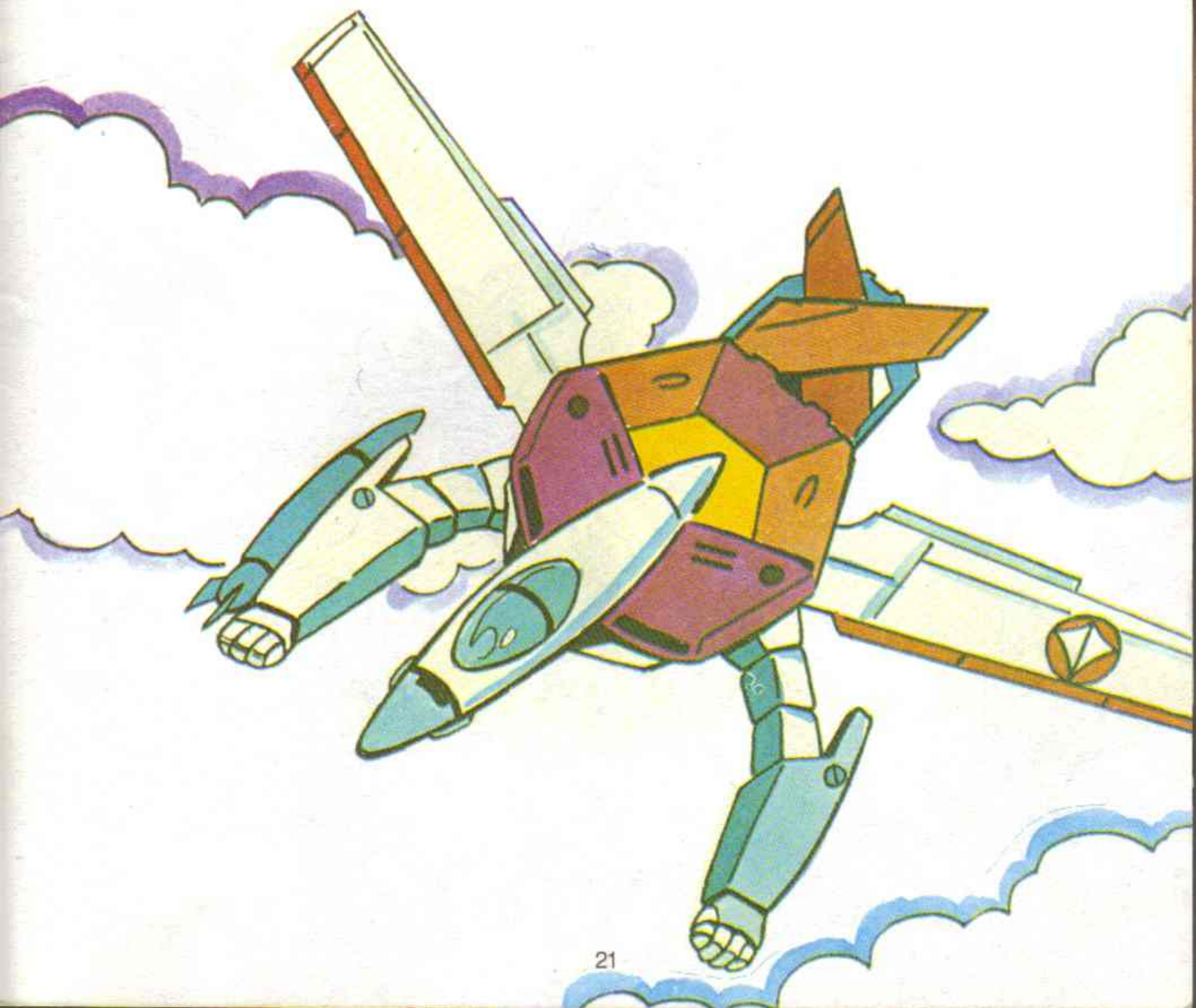


"Um — B? What's that mean?" His fingers groped frantically and accidentally pulled down a control lever marked G.

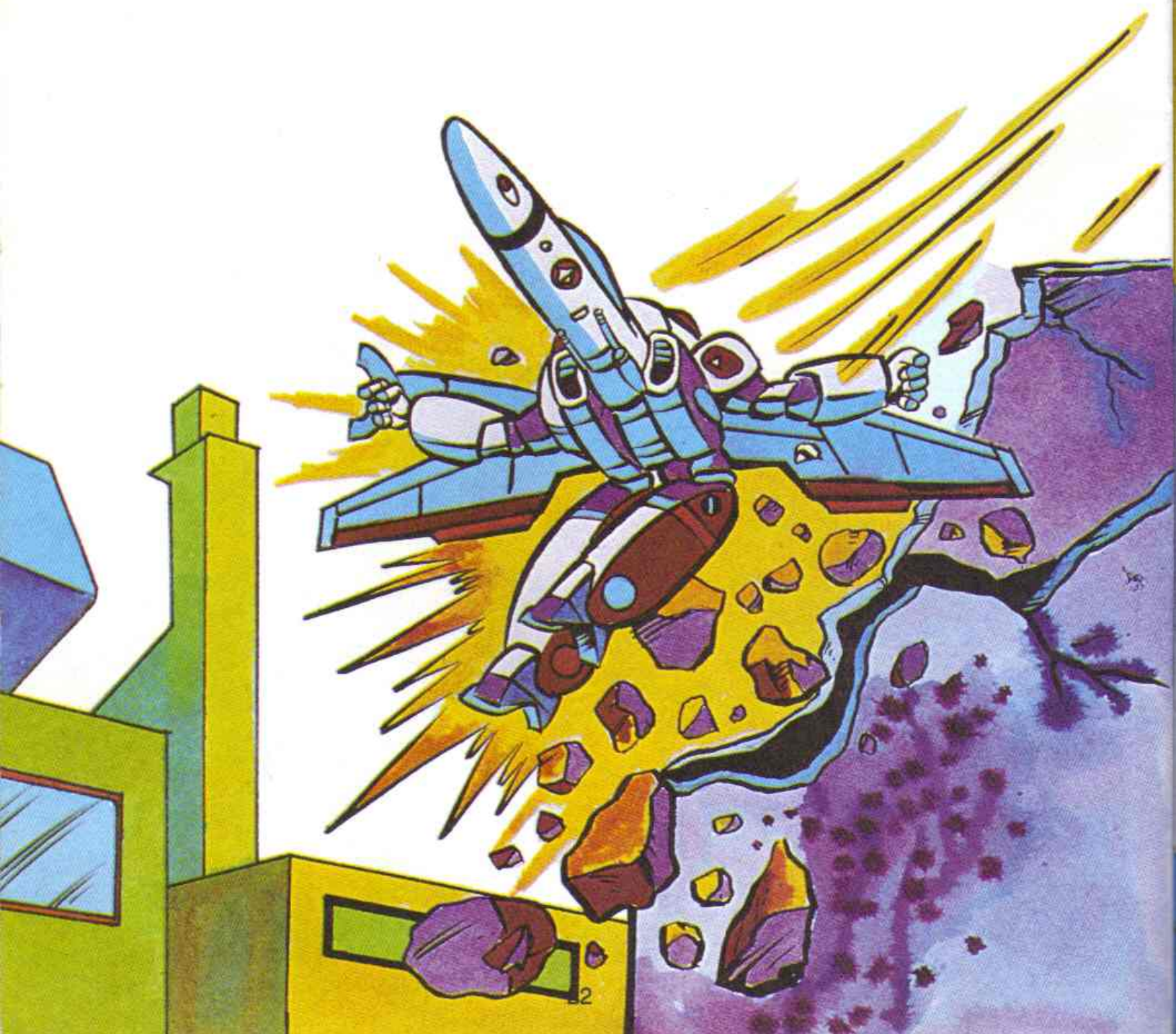
"You don't know?!" Lisa scolded. "Impossible! . . . All right, listen! Pull down the control marked B on the left side of your console!" "Okay, I found it!" Rick replied. "What's it doing?!"



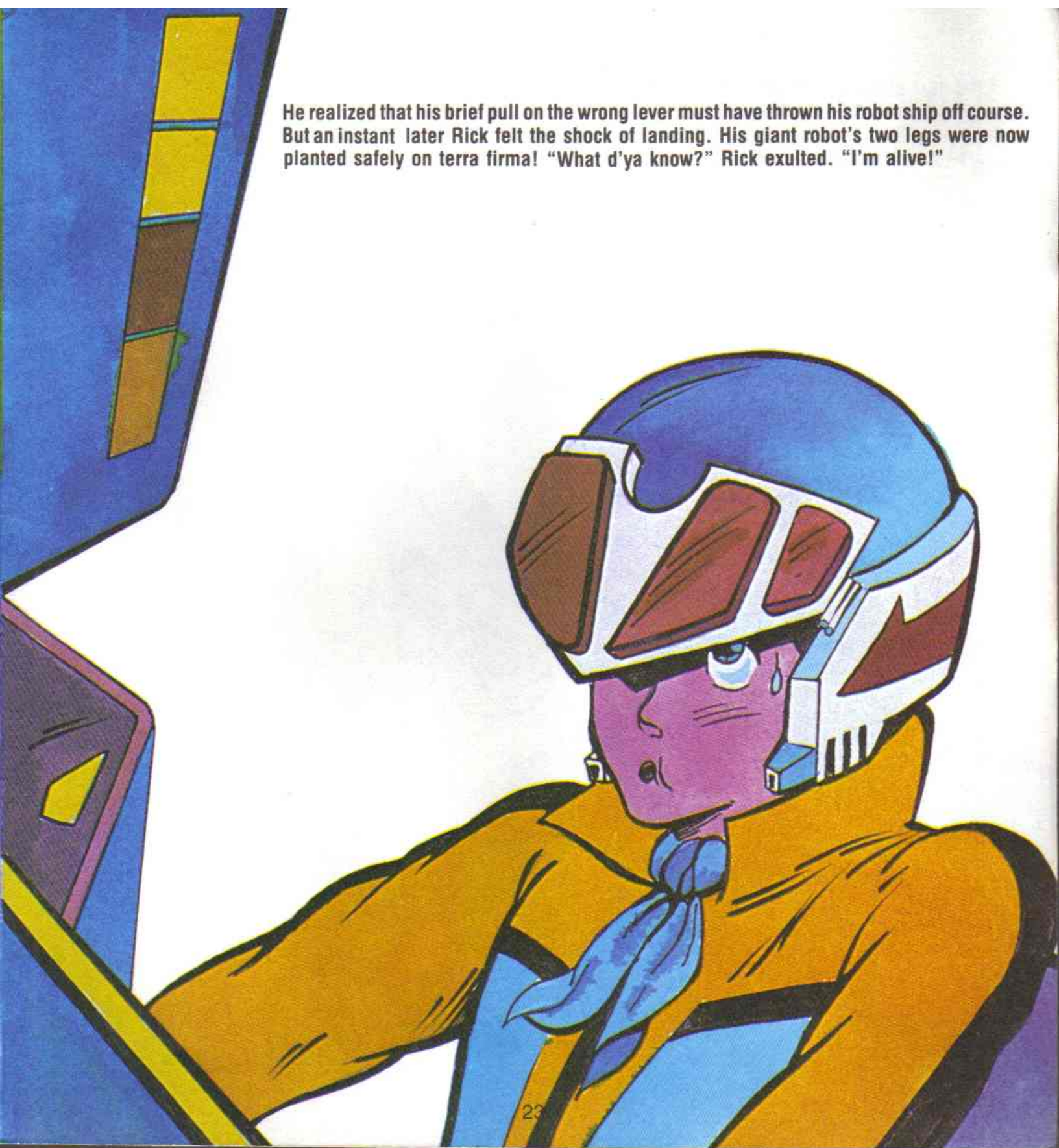
To his amazement, huge metal arms were suddenly extending out from the hull of his fighter craft — one on each side of the cockpit. His ship was changing into a huge robot!



Rick gaped in terror as it plummeted toward the earth. "Oooh-OOOFF!" There was a thunderous crash! His ship had just knocked the top off a skyscraper!



He realized that his brief pull on the wrong lever must have thrown his robot ship off course. But an instant later Rick felt the shock of landing. His giant robot's two legs were now planted safely on terra firma! "What d'ya know?" Rick exulted. "I'm alive!"



In the next episode of ROBOTECH, the aliens strike in full force and the desperate battle for Planet Earth reaches the very streets of Macross City! Don't miss the incredible action and suspense of "Countdown!" — the next thrilling chapter in the saga of ROBOTECH!

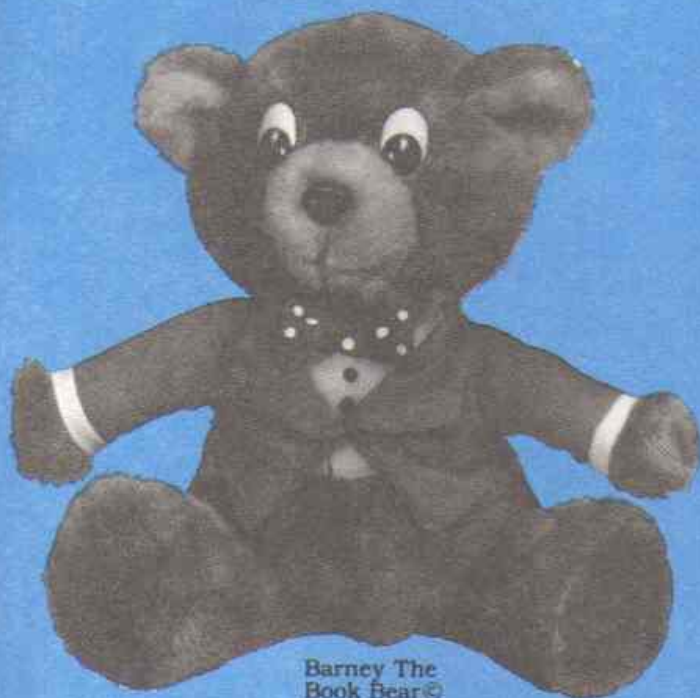
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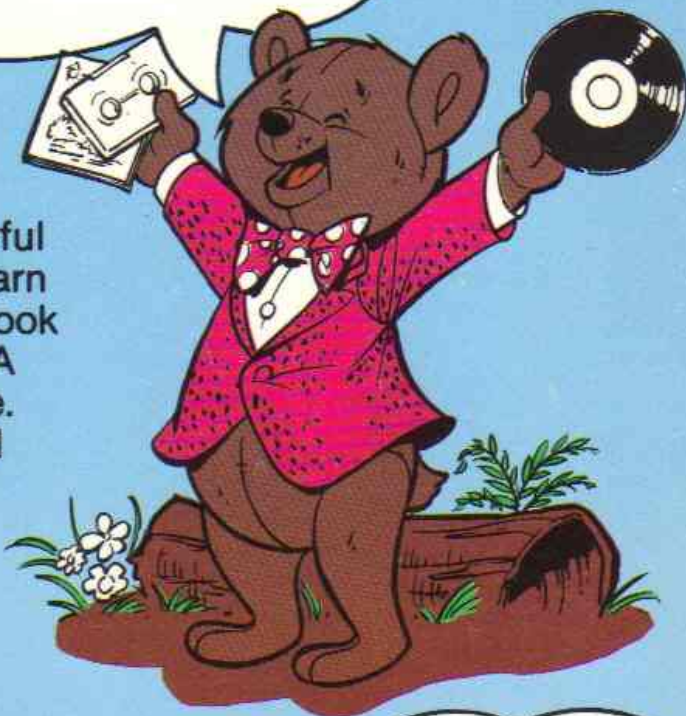
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